

The process and procedures described herein comply to federal legislation pertaining to public involvement in federal aid highway projects, specifically (1) statute 23 U.S.C. 128 requiring the opportunity for public hearings for certain types of highway projects together with certification and reporting requirements, and (2) statute 23 U.S.C. 109(h) assuring full consideration of possible social, economic, and environmental effects of proposed federal aid highway projects "and that the final decisions on the project are made in the best overall public interest."

Public involvement is continual within NDDOT and involves both formal and informal processes. It is intended to help all interested persons understand proposed facility improvements and their social, economic, and environmental effects. It is also a tool to give the citizens, local and state officials, and state and federal agencies an opportunity for input into project development. Public involvement gives the decision-makers valuable information to be used throughout the development phase.

Public involvement is part of the scoping process. Scoping is the process used to identify the range of alternatives and impacts and the significant issues to be addressed in order to evaluate the proposed improvements. This occurs during the preparation of the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan).

Public involvement is also encouraged throughout the project design process at various stages, including citizen advisory group meetings, public input meetings, public hearings, and post-project meetings.

It is intended that the public involvement procedures be designed in a manner that will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The purpose of Title VI is to eliminate race discrimination in federally funded programs by making sure that funds of the United States are not used to support race, color, sex, or national origin discrimination in programs receiving federal financial assistance.

The extent of involvement by the public in the development of a highway project varies according to the complexity of the project. Large complex projects may require several meetings and public hearings, while minor types of projects may not require any public involvement.

NDDOT, in consultation with FHWA, where appropriate, will determine the level of public involvement. Local officials may help in this determination.

#### **II-04.01 Solicitation of Views (SOV) Form Letters**

The solicitation of views process ensures that the scope of the project is made known to other jurisdictions and government agencies. It ensures that they have an opportunity to comment on the project's impacts on the environment and adjacent property. The requirements for adequate planning and coordination exist in both state and federal regulations.

Solicitation of views should be performed on all projects that involve earthwork or may have environmental impacts.

For county federal aid projects, the county is responsible for the solicitation of views.

#### **II-04.01.01 Form Letters**

The environmental documentation author should prepare a letter describing the proposed project. All solicitation letters should have a map of the proposed project including the section, township, and range. The attached map should delineate the project area and any expected area of disturbance. These letters are used to request comments on the proposed project from federal, state, local, and private agencies. If an agency is responsible by law for granting or approving a necessary permit, license, or other concurrence on a project, it is considered a cooperating agency. Agencies should be requested to respond to the project designer within 30 days.

Presently there are six different kinds of solicitation letters. The use of the Information Technology Division's Information Processing services to create these letters is recommended. All SOV letters can be found on the web at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms.

##### **Letter 1 (General Solicitation)**

A general-purpose letter that can be used for almost all agencies.

##### **Letter 2 (United States Army Corps of Engineers)**

Will be sent after the wetland delineation is complete. The letter will request a jurisdictional determination of all waters and wetlands within the project area.

##### **Letter 3 (US Department of Agriculture)**

Used to solicit the views of the state conservationist, specifically asking for identification of prime farmland.

##### **Letter 4 (State Health Department)**

The solicitation of the North Dakota Department of Health and Consolidated Laboratories. It requires traffic counts after project completion and forecast traffic. It is directed towards air quality, but may be revised to request information on water quality.

**Letter 5 (Cooperating Agency)**

The cooperative agency letter, asking for input from other agencies affected by the project. The solicitation of views letter should be used to request federal agencies, which have jurisdiction by law, to be a cooperating agency. This will generally be those agencies that will be granting or approving a permit, license, or other concurrence on a project. EIS Only - Project Dependent.

**Letter 6 (State Historic Preservation Officer)**

The documentation in letter 6 is to be written by both the PCR author and the Design - Cultural Resource Section. PCR authors are asked to detail the following; project number, legal location, project type, purpose and need, and project description. Then PCR authors are asked to coordinate the completion of this letter through the Cultural Resource Section. See Appendix II-04 B for an example.

Notes: These letters are "form letters" and need to be merged to obtain the correct format. Users should use the merge button (see toolbar at the top of form letters). Contact information processing if further guidance on the use of form letters is needed. These letters can be found at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms.

**Solicitation of Views Letter to the United States Army Corps of Engineers**

The SOV letter to the Corps will be sent after the wetland delineation is complete. The wetland delineation will be attached to the letter, and the letter will request a jurisdictional determination of all the waters and wetlands contained within the project area. The form letter can be found at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms.

If the Corps of Engineers responds to the solicitation of views letter by stating that no jurisdictional waters lie within the project area, no further action is necessary by NDDOT. If the Corps responds by stating there are jurisdictional waters within the project area, then further action is necessary by NDDOT. A copy of the Corps response is to be forwarded to the Design Division – Engineering and Environmental Section by the applicable NDDOT personnel or technical support. All correspondence should include the Corps project and permit numbers.

**II-04.01.02 Mailing Lists**

The environmental documentation writer needs to evaluate what information is going to be provided in the form letters and where these form letters are going to be sent. A list of agencies from which views will be solicited should be developed and documented. Authors should start this list from the master list of agencies. The most current list of agencies is located at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms.

The master solicitation of views list contains agencies, groups, associations and officials that NDDOT determines to have an interest in NDDOT projects. Interested individuals, groups, or agencies may, at their request, be enrolled on NDDOT solicitation of views mailing list. A special effort should be made to seek out and include the interests of minority groups or individuals.

Users should only print the mailing list when needed. This list will be updated frequently on the web. Users should always obtain a current master SOV list before selecting addresses. Please make recommendations to improve the master SOV list and send address revisions to the Engineering and Environmental Section of the Design Division.

A project specific mailing list should be created for each project that requires solicitation of views. This list is needed for the environmental documentation. See Appendix II-04 A for an example of a job specific mailing list.

#### **II-04.01.02.01 Usage Codes**

The people-organizations on the master Solicitation of Views List have been assigned a usage code. The usage code is a way of sorting and organizing the list by groups with similar interest or needs. The date edited field is intended to help keep track of the last time an address was reviewed. The following information describes the usage code.

<u>Usage Code</u>	<u>Description</u>
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These parties are always solicited for their views:

100	General
110	Indian Authorities

The following parties are not always solicited. The decision whether to solicit a view is dependent on the type and location of the project.

200	Military
300	Cultural

Environmental:

400	General
410	Prime Farm Land
420	Wetlands
430	Federal and State Lands
440	Economic

450	Biological
460	Geological

City (reference A Directory of Government Officials@):

500	General
510	Mayor
520	Engineer
530	Planner
540	Public Works Department
550	School Superintendent- Boards- Districts.
560	Park Superintendents- Boards
570	Chamber of Commerce
580	Commission or Council

County (reference ACounty Officials Directory@ and AND Government Telephone Directory@):

600	General
610	Commission-Chairperson
620	Auditor
630	Engineer
640	Water Resource Districts (some projects require more than one contact, usually broken out into counties, reference <a href="http://www.swc.state.nd.us/waterlinkds.html">www.swc.state.nd.us/waterlinkds.html</a> under Water Resource Boards)

Proximity Solicitations:

700	General
710	Railroads
720	Airports
730	Utility Companies-Authorities
740	Radio -Television Stations if facilities are located near project
750	Navigable Rivers
810	Planning Councils and Authorities -Special interest Groups
820	Contractors

Township:

900

General

910

Clerks

**II-04.01.03 Printing, Signing And Distribution**

Once the final mailing list is established, the letters are distributed. Note that the solicitation of views for city-developed projects should be signed by the local agency's project engineer or consultant engineer. The solicitation of views for district developed projects should be signed by the District Engineer. The solicitation of views for projects developed in NDDOT Design Division should be signed by the Design Engineer or signed by the Bridge Engineer if the project is developed in the Bridge Division.

After the letters are signed, NDDOT's process is to scan them into FileNet and keep a copy for attaching to the PCR. The original is mailed to the addressee. For attachments to environmental documents, use one type of each form letter (without address when multiple addresses solicited) and include the list of addresses solicited for that project.

**II-04.01.04 Comments**

Comments received in response to solicitation of views letters, and comments noted from public input meetings, should be considered and, when appropriate, addressed in the PCR. These comments should be incorporated into an appendix of the PCR and scanned into FileNet.

**II-04.02 Public Input Meetings**

Public input meetings provide an early opportunity for the public and other agencies to comment on the need for the project, suggest alternates, and identify areas of concern. NDDOT strongly encourages holding public meetings for all major urban projects.

Public input meetings are informal and are used primarily for major reconstruction projects in urban areas. They may also be held for other projects involving relocation, a highway on a new location, or consideration of a large number of alternates.

The decision to hold a public input meeting should be discussed at the field review and/or management presentation meeting. This decision will be made by NDDOT and FHWA for all projects on the national highway system. Cities adjacent to or encompassing proposed projects should also be made part of this decision process. For county projects, the county is responsible for holding input meetings when necessary.

The designer or PCR author will coordinate meeting location and time, advertise meeting, prepare informational handouts and exhibits, and conduct the input meeting. Input meetings may be held either jointly with other city meetings such as city or county council, city planning

commission, county commission meeting, etc., or a special meeting called specifically to discuss a given project.

Public input may also be obtained by an individual contact or through an invitation to attend a public meeting or hearing.

Comments received during the public input meeting should be incorporated into the project concept report (PCR) and scanned into FileNet.

### **II-04.03 Public Hearings**

Public hearings are held to discuss the proposed improvements and their social, economic, environmental, impacts. The hearings are open discussions of the pros and cons of projects and alternatives. A summary of the results of any social, economic, environmental, or land use studies made in relation to the project are presented. Public hearings will be held for certain projects after preparation and circulation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, an Environmental Assessment, or after preparation of the Project Concept Report for projects processed as Categorical Exclusions.

A public hearing, or an opportunity for a hearing, is required if a project:

- Involves the acquisition of significant additional right of way. Narrow strips of right of way frontage or easement are not ordinarily considered significant.
- Has a significant adverse effect upon abutting real property.
- Substantially changes roadway geometry or function of roads or streets connecting with the improved facility.
- Substantially changes roadway geometry or function of connecting roadways at or near a city or town.
- Has a significant social, economic, environmental, or other impact.
- Is environmentally controversial.
- Involves a bypass or significant change in traffic patterns.
- Has a significant temporary effect on traffic and possibly requires traffic detours.
- There is substantial interest in holding a hearing.
- Another agency with jurisdiction over the actions has requested a hearing.

- FHWA determines that a public hearing is in the public interest.

If a hearing or hearings are required, either the city, county or NDDOT (designer or PCR author), depending on who developed the project, will perform the necessary activities including: advertising, coordinate meeting location and time, prepare informational handouts and exhibits, provide project information for AV presentation, conduct and transcribe the hearings, and make the final location and design determination based on the results of the hearings.

Additional hearings, or opportunity for, will be provided when there is:

- Substantial change in the proposal.
- Substantial unanticipated development in the area affected by the proposal.
- An unusually long lapse of time since the last hearing.
- Identification of significant social, economic, or environmental effects not previously considered at earlier hearings.

The Deputy Director For Engineering, in consultation with FHWA, where appropriate, will determine whether a hearing or opportunity for hearing is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Deputy Director For Engineering, in consultation with Design Division, will determine:

- Whether a hearing is held or an opportunity for hearing offered for those projects which NEPA requires formal notification to the public for an opportunity to request a hearing.
- Whether or not a hearing will be held for projects not requiring hearings under NEPA.

On county federal aid projects, the Local Government Engineer will make this decision.

In general, a hearing is not held for improvements such as resurfacing, widening existing lanes, adding auxiliary lanes, replacing existing structures or separations, installing traffic control devices, or similar improvements.

#### **II-04.03.01 Opportunity For Public Hearing**

The activity of providing an AOpportunity for Public Hearing@ is used when a public hearing is required, but interest in the proposed project is limited and not controversial. This activity is a tool that can be used to skip a Public Hearing if the lack of interest can be demonstrated and documented or the interested parties can be addressed on an individual basis. This activity can be complicated and lengthen the project development process if used incorrectly. Often, directly



conducting a public hearing is quicker than providing a notice of opportunity for a public hearing, determining that a hearing is required and finally conducting the public hearing.

When NEPA requires a formal notification to the public for an opportunity to request a hearing, Design Division is responsible for having the notices published and receiving responses to the notice for NDDOT projects. County officials will be responsible on city projects. The notice of opportunity for a hearing is published once a week for two consecutive weeks in one or more newspapers having general circulation in the area of the project. The notice should:

- Describe the location and types of the proposed improvements.
- Contain a statement indicating where and when the plans and other documents are available for review.
- Includes a map of the proposed project when practicable.
- Identifies any wetlands or significant flood plain encroachments.
- Instructions for the public as to how they may request a public hearing.
- Include the deadline for submission of a request for hearing is 15 days after the first publication.
- Indicate that all requests on state and urban projects must be made in writing, addressed to the Director, North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), and will be acknowledged in writing by the NDDOT. City or county contact information shall be included in notices for city or county projects and the owner should acknowledge receipt of requests in writing.

County officials have this responsibility on county projects. For all other projects the Design Division is responsible for having the notices published and receiving requests.

Requests on a county project should be directed to the county auditor of the county in which the project is located.

If, after the deadline date has passed and:

- No requests have been received; NDDOT forwards to FHWA, where appropriate, a copy of the published notice and a certification that no written requests for a hearing were received.
- Only one or two persons request a hearing and the issues can be satisfactorily resolved by meeting with the individuals, the persons making the request may withdraw the request. The person making a request is allowed five days after the deadline for the submission to

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withdraw the request, in writing. No reason for withdrawal need be given. When a request is withdrawn, it is treated as if no request was made. If, after the five days allowed for withdrawal, any bonafide request remains, a hearing is held.

**II-04.03.02 Public Hearing/Input Meeting Notification**

Public hearings will be held at a convenient time and place. Public hearing/input meeting notification should be coordinated with the administrative assistant assigned to your division.

- A notice of public hearing/input meeting is published once in one or more papers having a general circulation in the area of the project. The publication will be 15 to 21 days prior to the hearing. Press release examples can be found on the web at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms. All other press releases should be reviewed and approved by the NDDOT - Public and Employees Affairs Officer.
- Five to ten days prior to the hearing/input meeting, news releases are issued to all media in the area of the project. Any interested agencies, officials, groups, or individuals that have expressed an interest in the proposed project will be notified by mail. In addition, interested individuals may be sought by random mailing in the area of the project.
- Each notice of public hearing/input meeting specifies at a minimum the following information. See examples on the web at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Manual Reference & Forms. All other press releases should be reviewed and approved by the NDDOT - Public and Employees Affairs Officer.
  - The place, date, and time of hearing.
  - The type of hearing (input, hearing or informational).
  - The location and type of improvement proposed.
  - Where the public can view related maps, drawings, and proposed documents.
  - The relocation assistance programs will be discussed and a tentative schedule of right of way acquisition and construction will be presented.
  - How to submit a statement or exhibits at or after the hearing. Additional statements and exhibits will be received by the city, or NDDOT, for ten working days after the hearing.

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- To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a teletypewriter (TTY) communications device must be available upon request.
- Flyers will be mailed or hand delivered to landowners immediately adjacent to the project limits when the project is within city limits. This delivery, if needed, will be coordinated with the district.
  - The place, date, and time of hearing, a description of the type of hearing, a description of the location and type of improvement proposed, identification of significant flood plain encroachments, and, when practical, maps or drawings.
  - A brief description of how to submit a statement or exhibits at the hearing. Additional statements and exhibits will be received by NDDOT for ten days after the hearing. Appropriate documents such as maps or environmental statements, are available in the nearest district office or in the Central Office in Bismarck.

**II-04.03.03 Conducting The Public Hearing**

The following should be presented in oral statements, made available in published form, or in prepared audio-visual presentation, and should be considered as a minimum introduction to the project concept.

- A description of the project or projects under consideration and any social, economic, or environmental effects, alternatives considered identification of any wetland or flood plain encroachments, and a tentative schedule of construction.
- Information to assist the public in participating in the hearing or in presenting statements or exhibits at the hearing. Informing the participants that statements or exhibits may be presented for ten days following the hearing and they will be made a part of the record.
- A simple statement of the availability and intent of the relocation assistance program and relocation assistance payments is presented. On a project which could result in relocation of persons or businesses, information on relocation assistance and payments is presented. The depth of the presentation is influenced by the amount or type of relocation involved. If right of way is to be acquired, a tentative schedule of acquisition is presented and the land acquisition process discussed. A brochure describing the land acquisition process and the owner's rights, privileges, and obligation will be distributed.

Public hearings should be held at a time and place convenient for affected citizens and accessible to the mobility-impaired. The following are the two most common formats, but there are others

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that may be appropriate. The two settings start out the same with a formal presentation of the overall project information.

- Traditional format: The traditional format is effective in presenting and gathering information, and especially in disseminating large amounts of data to a large, diverse audience. It is commonly used at meetings designed to introduce a project; present alternative alignments or designs; or discuss potential social, environmental, and economic impacts. This format consists of an agency presentation (video and lecture), followed by a discussion period with the audience. This hearing should be recorded to include all comments in the transcript of public hearing.

Drawbacks of the traditional format include the necessity of using microphones, and the physical and psychological separation of the agency from the community (with the agency in front, usually on a raised platform). This implied separation tends to discourage less articulate or inexperienced speakers from participating, polarize positions, and reinforce the "us-vs-them" approach of some members of the public.

- Open-house format: The open-house format is becoming increasingly popular for dealing with the public on a one-to-one basis. It lets people express their thoughts about a plan without having to make a public speech. Participants are encouraged to read the hearing brochure, ask questions, review exhibits, view a video, encouraged to send in a comment card or letter to formally express the oral communication made at the hearing, and interact informally with each other and with agency representatives. Since this type of hearing is, by its nature, easy to conduct during both daytime and evening hours, all segments of the project population can attend. There are no agendas, presentations, or other structured activities (except possibly for a brief, repeating video on the project), so people can come and go at will.
- The decision on which hearing format to use is made by:
  - The city, on urban roads program projects
  - The county, on county major collector program projects
  - NDDOT on all other projects

Whether a traditional or open-house format is conducted, the following information should be presented at the hearing:

- The project's purpose, need, and consistency with the goals and objectives of any local planning.

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- The project's alternates and major design features.
- The project's social, economic, environmental, and other impacts of the project.
- The right of way acquisition process, to include the relocation assistance program if needed. Also a tentative schedule of acquisition will be presented along with a brochure describing the land acquisition process and the owner's rights, privileges, and obligation will be distributed.
- A description of the procedures for receiving both oral and written statements from the public. Informing the participants that statements or exhibits may be presented for ten days following the hearing and will be made part of the record.
- Provide a tentative schedule of construction.
- The source of project funding.
- The agency responsible for developing the project.

If a hearing is conducted, any presenter's notes, written comments received within the specified time period, and a transcript of the oral proceedings and presentation should be incorporated into a transcript of public hearing or summation of public hearing and project decisions document.

#### **II-04.03.04 Public Hearings Response Period**

There is a ten working day response period following the public hearing in which the public may send written comments to the city, county, or NDDOT, depending on who developed the project.

#### **II-04.03.05 Transcript of Public Hearing**

After the public hearing response period has passed, the public hearing transcript is prepared for each required hearing on the state or urban system by the designer or PCR author. The county prepares the transcript and submits it to the Local Government Engineer on county system projects. The transcript contains information about the hearing such as: when and where it was held or a copy of the hearing advertisement, an explanation of the hearing, a copy of any handouts, a list of the exhibits presented, the video script (if video was used), a copy of the roster, a copy of all comments received, and any other information about the meeting. The transcript is distributed using FileNet to the federal, state, and local officials involved (usually those who received a draft copy of the PCR). The distribution list is on the web at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Distribution List. The original copy of the transcript is submitted to the administrative assistant in the Office of Project Development. Members of the public who request a transcript at the public hearing should also be sent a free

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copy. The administrative assistant will make copies of the original and send a copy to the public who requested it and any other copies that are required.

If the public hearing is not considered a “required” hearing per guidance under hearing requirements, a transcript may not be prepared. The determination of need for a transcript will be made in consultation with FHWA. In all cases, a Summation of Public Hearing and Decisions document is prepared.

#### **II-04.03.06 Post Hearing Meeting**

Soon after the ten working day response time, a post hearing meeting should be held to discuss the project concept, alternatives, and public testimony. This meeting is held to make recommendations to executive management. On local developed projects, the local agency determines who should attend the meeting. Although, the District Engineer should be invited.

For NDDOT developed projects, the designer or PCR author will determine the attendees.

#### **II-04.03.07 Summation of Public Hearing and Decisions Document**

After the post hearing meeting, a “Summation of Public Hearing and Project Decisions” document containing recommendations is prepared. This document should address all comments received and should include the following information: project overview, summary of public hearing, all comments received from the hearing, proposed alternatives, post hearing meeting comments, cost estimate and construction schedule, decisions section, and any other important information. The final document is submitted to executive management for final decisions.

For local developed projects, the Mayor or Commission Chairman signs the Summation document and sends it to NDDOT for the purpose of receiving federal funds. Following NDDOT approval, the local agency distributes the Summation to all interested agencies and local officials.

For NDDOT developed projects, the designer or PCR author will submit the original copy to the administrative assistant in the Office of Project Development. The Summation will be distributed (using FileNet where applicable) to all interested agencies and local officials after the Deputy Director for Engineering has approved the project concepts.

The distribution list is on the web at [www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html](http://www.state.nd.us/dot/designmanual.html) under Design Distribution List.

#### **II-04.04 Public Informational Meetings**

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The purpose of Public Informational Meetings generally is to inform the public of project proposals, not to receive input from the public. This distinction should be made clear on press releases advertising the meetings.

#### **II-04.05 Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings**

Citizen advisory groups are established on complex projects to obtain early public involvement and input on the projects. The groups should be comprised of adjacent property owners, business people, the general public, or special interests, as appropriate for that project. Normally, the first meetings with the group are held before the completion of detailed engineering studies. The group should be involved throughout the project development phase. The designer or PCR author will conduct citizen advisory meetings to provide review and comment of project development activities; prepare informational handouts and exhibits, as necessary; prepare and distribute written summary of comments received; and prepare and distribute project newsletter to participants, as necessary.

#### **II-04.06 Making Arrangements for Public Meetings**

The following checklist can be used to help schedule public meetings.

- Review needed preparation time for information, pamphlets and exhibits, and adjust time frame accordingly.
- Determine desired individual representation at the meeting: City, FHWA, NDDOT, etc.
- Determine time that will work with the above representation.
- Clear with city calendar, check for other events that will influence public attendance.
- Reserve location.
- Make audio and visual equipment arrangements if necessary.

#### **II-04.07 Invitations**

Invitations should be used for public input meetings and hearings. These invitations should be considered supplemental. They are not intended to reflect exclusiveness. These meetings are open to the entire public.

A good way to develop an invitation list is to start with the addresses used for the solicitation of views and build on it. The following list includes some of the groups to consider:

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- City Officials
- Minorities (see NDDOT affirmative action directory)
- Chamber of Commerce
- County Officials
- Legislators
- Utilities
- Park Boards
- Planning and Zoning Committee (city -county)
- Airport Authority
- State and Federal Agencies

An attempt should also be made to contact all property owners and tenants adjacent to the proposed project. This is usually accomplished by one of two methods. First try to get the city or county to develop and send you a mailing list. They usually have some sort of data base used for tax purposes that could also be used to create a mailing list for the proposed project. If the first method doesn't work and staff is available, invitations can also be delivered door to door as best as possible.

**II-04.08 News Releases**

Prepare and send out news releases. The principle environmental documentation writer is to notify the NDDOT Public and Employee Affairs Officer who will implement news releases; Newspapers (No paid advertising), Radio /TV (No paid advertising).

Five to ten days before the hearing, a news release may be issued to all media in the project area. Any interested agencies, officials, groups, or individuals affected by the project should be notified by mail. In addition, and as appropriate, use direct mail, a poster campaign, public service announcements, paid advertising, or other means of advertising the hearing may be used.

**II-04.09 Environmental Document Availability**

The project concept report, along with backup information, will be available for public examination and review at the NDDOT district office in which the project is located and the NDDOT central office. Any interested official, agency, group, or person may obtain a copy by requesting a copy from the Design Division.